

McKinney-Vento and Homelessness Education Information Packet

Designed for Homeless Education Liaisons, School Professionals, and Interested Stakeholders



**Developed by New Hampshire Department of Education
Homeless and Migrant Program and AmeriCorps VISTAs**

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AN INTRODUCTION TO MCKINNEY-VENTO AND BEST PRACTICES TO ASSIST HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

WELCOME MESSAGE



Homelessness is a pervasive issue in American society, and a human tragedy. Anyone can become homeless at any given time due to a variety of circumstances. While the national discussion of homelessness often revolves around the adult population, children are equally, and in many circumstances, more adversely affected by homelessness.

Homeless youth are less likely to graduate high school and move on to higher education. They are prone to being bullied in school, face subjection to negative stigmas associated with homelessness, are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety, and often lose hope of entering the middle class (NCHE, 2013).

It is imperative that communities are educated on the challenges homeless youth face, and be made aware of federal and community resources and legislation that are targeted to assist homeless and unaccompanied children, youth, and their families.

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HOMELESS AND MIGRANT PROGRAMS



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NEW HAMPSHIRE HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Homeless Education Program Mission and Objectives

The Homeless Education Program at the New Hampshire Department of Education provides resources and technical assistance to districts, schools, professionals, volunteers and persons in need of assistance to better understand laws pertaining to the rights of homeless children and youth. Additionally, the program assists school districts and others in understanding their responsibilities and obligations as required under State and Federal laws.

The Homeless Program assists in the coordination and facilitation of various work groups and task forces dedicated to tackling challenges homeless and unaccompanied youth face, such as the New Hampshire Teen Task Force on Homelessness and Higher Education Initiative.

NEW HAMPSHIRE MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Migrant Education Program Mission and Objectives

The Migrant Education Program (Title I, Part C) is a federally-funded program that provides educational and support services for the eligible children of migrant workers, or the migrant workers themselves, if they are under 22 years old and have not graduated from high school. Migrant students have unique educational needs because their schooling can be frequently interrupted as their families move in search of work. Often, they underperform in school and are at risk of dropping out due to circumstances which arise from their situation.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 holds migrant children to the same challenging state content and student performance standards as all children. An eligible student (birth to age 21) has moved, either with family or alone, to obtain or seek employment in fishing or agriculture (including food processing, dairy, vegetable, fruit and sod farms, and lumbering operations). This move from one school district to another must have occurred within the last three years.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FEDERAL AGENCY



U.S. Department of Education Mission and Objectives

The U.S. Department of Education's (USDE) mission is "To promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access" (USDE, 2014). The USDE provides numerous services and resources to school districts across America, including student loans, technology and infrastructure upgrades, and setting standards for school performance in compliance with federal legislation.

Additionally, the USDE provides definitions on homelessness based on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which provides certain guidelines on how schools need to ensure homeless students are getting the same opportunities and access to services as their housed peers.

The USDE website can be found [here](#).

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOMELESS TEEN TASK FORCE

NEW HAMPSHIRE WORKGROUP



Teen Task Force (TTF) Mission and Objectives

Established in 2008, the New Hampshire Teen Task force is comprised of members who represent various organizations in the state of New Hampshire, including the Department of Education, Health and Human Services, DCYF, Childcare Licensing, homeless school liaisons, state representatives, county officials, law enforcement personnel, and other concerned members of the community.

The Teen Task Force's mission is to investigate and find potential remedies to challenges, barriers, and needs of homeless and unaccompanied youth in New Hampshire and to find solutions to addressing those needs. The Teen Task Force also strives to raise awareness throughout New Hampshire on the issue of youth homelessness.

New Hampshire's school professionals and service providers are committed to ending homelessness. The group meets on a monthly basis to move forward the work of its mission.

NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVE

NEW HAMPSHIRE WORKGROUP



Higher Education Initiative Mission and Objectives

The Higher Education Initiative is a group of school, education, and service professionals that seek to bridge the gap for homeless and unaccompanied youth between high school and higher education by developing a single point of contact (SPOC) at each higher ed. campus in NH, to assist homeless students with acclimating to college and accessing resources.

It is widely known that professional success is directly tied to educational achievement, and assisting homeless and unaccompanied youth in pursuing higher education is one way to break the cycle of poverty (NAEH CY, 2013).

USEFUL WEBSITES ON HOMELESS EDUCATION

MCKINNEY-VENTO TRAINING AND SUPPORT



National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)

NCHE serves as the U.S. Department of Education's technical information and assistance center and provides leading research, articles, and other resources in the field of homeless education. Their published work is cited frequently by other organizations and is nationally recognized.

The NCHE has a comprehensive website with invaluable tools to help all providers working with homeless families and individuals. Links to data on the national and state levels on homeless numbers, training resources and free webinars on homeless related topics are available. Additionally, guidance on applying McKinney-Vento and other laws to their work, and much more can be found on the NCHE website.

The NCHE website can be found [here](#).

USEFUL WEBSITES ON HOMELESS EDUCATION

MCKINNEY-VENTO AND LEGAL GUIDANCE



National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)

NAEHCY is a national organization that is engaged in advocacy addressing the rights and ability of homeless and unaccompanied children and youth to access quality education. NAEHCY provides free resources on their website related to a variety of topics covering the importance of identifying homeless and unaccompanied youth and linking services in communities to those in need.

NAEHCY provides frequent updates on legislative initiatives addressing homeless issues around the country, assists in the facilitation of numerous youth task forces, focusing on issues ranging from housing and transportation to nutrition and health care, and organize a nationally acclaimed annual conference that brings together stakeholders from across the U.S. to educate and discuss improving homeless services.

The NAEHCY website can be found [here](#).

USEFUL WEBSITES ON HOMELESS EDUCATION

LEGAL ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS



National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP)

NLCHP is a national organization that seeks to end and prevent homelessness through educating the public, advocacy efforts, and to impact legislation and other litigation that affects homeless and poverty issues. NLCHP provides current news on events and legislation that impact homeless and poverty stricken populations, and in particular highlight their efforts to ensure people have access to basic housing.

Rental discrimination and unaffordable housing cases are issues NLCHP deals with on a daily basis. NLCHP's website has a host of information on homeless and poverty issues, as well as opportunities for people to get involved to promote public awareness of these topics.

The NLCHP website can be found [here](#).

USEFUL WEBSITES ON HOMELESS EDUCATION

HEALTH CARE SERVICES



National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

NCTSN seeks to promote the challenges of addressing and treating childhood traumatic stress. NCTSN encourages collaboration between health care and other service providers to create comprehensive service networks, and strives to raise public awareness about the severity of childhood traumatic stress. Additionally, NCTSN educates the public on the different types of traumas children may experience and how to deal with or refer youth dealing with these specific situations.

Homelessness takes on many forms, and can be caused by a variety of complex reasons. Homeless and unaccompanied youth may be in that situation due to abuse in the home, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, rejected by parents due to their sexual orientation, or due to death or illness in the family. NCTSN has resources that can assist you when dealing with homeless and unaccompanied youth who need professional medical and mental health assistance.

The NCTSN website can be found [here](#).

USEFUL WEBSITES ON HOMELESS EDUCATION

RESEARCH, ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS



Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness (ICPH)

The Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness is a nationally recognized organization that conducts substantive research on homelessness in the United States, and publishes scientifically researched reports on the underlying causes of individual and family homelessness, and provides policy recommendations on how to address the challenges that not only homeless individuals and families face, but how homelessness impacts American society.

ICPH has a wealth of resources on its website, and engages community members through presentations on its research results. Much of ICPH's work is based on homelessness in New York State, but nationwide information is readily available. Analyzing how states compare to one another can demonstrate effective strategies to employ in combating homelessness.

The ICPH website can be found [here](#).

ENROLLMENT GUIDANCE

ENSURING SCHOOL ACCESS



Enrolling Homeless and Unaccompanied Children and Youth

One of the primary responsibilities of a homeless education liaison is to identify and ensure enrollment of homeless and unaccompanied children and youth in their school district. Homeless and unaccompanied children and youth are guaranteed access to same services as their housed peers, and are able to tap into additional assistance under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) has developed several briefs to define a homeless education liaison's responsibilities for enrolling homeless and unaccompanied children and youth.

NCHE's enrollment guidance brief can be found [here](#).

NCHE's safety and confidentiality pointers regarding enrollment can be found [here](#).

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

RESOLVING DISPUTES



Resolving Disputes Between Parties

Homeless education liaisons are responsible for acting as the primary intermediary between school districts and students, parents or other organizations/parties. If a scenario develops that involves conflict between the school district and another party the liaison is the first individual that will attempt to mediate and resolve the dispute before involving additional persons. Disputes between school districts and the families of homeless and unaccompanied children and youth often revolve around transportation, school of origin, or housing circumstances.

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) had developed a brief on how homeless liaisons and school districts can tackle disputes between themselves and another party.

NCHE's dispute resolution brief can be found [here](#).

TRANSPORTATION AND SCHOOL SELECTION

TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL



Transportation Requirements for School Districts with Homeless and Unaccompanied Children and Youth

Homeless and unaccompanied children and youth are often highly mobile due to their living circumstances, constantly moving between school district boundaries throughout the course of a school year. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act allows homeless and unaccompanied youth to remain in their “school of origin” - the school that a student attended last prior to moving until the end of the school year, in an effort to reduce school mobility. Additionally, school districts must transport homeless and unaccompanied children and youth to and from their school of origin (to a feasible extent).

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) has developed a comprehensive brief on transportation, as well as school selection and the obligations that school districts must fulfill to assist homeless and unaccompanied children and youth attend their school of origin.

NCHE’s transportation brief can be found [here](#).

NCHE’s school selection brief can be found [here](#).

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ENCOURAGING AFTER SCHOOL PARTICIPATION



Involving Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth in Extracurricular Activities

National studies have shown that involving homeless and unaccompanied youth in extracurricular activities assists them in developing a deeper bond with peers and the school, leading to greater academic success (NCHE, 2013). School districts should do everything in their power to reduce barriers to participate in extracurricular activities for homeless and unaccompanied youth.

The National Center for Homeless Education has developed a brief with several factors for school districts to take into consideration when developing methods to reduce barriers to participate in extracurricular activities and programs.

NCHE's brief on reducing barriers to access extracurricular activities for homeless and unaccompanied children and youth can be found [here](#).

NUTRITION

FOOD SECURITY



Providing Food Security for Homeless Unaccompanied Youth

The majority of homeless unaccompanied youth also suffer through poverty due to their life circumstances (NCHE, 2013). Often times food security for homeless families becomes a large concern, but school districts have the capability to help homeless and unaccompanied youth by offering free and reduced lunch to these students. Access to a meal should not be something these students should worry about when attending school.

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) has developed a food security brief that outlines the importance of ensuring homeless and unaccompanied youth get access to meals, as well as various programs that can assist their families with food security, such as weekend meal packages. NCHE's nutrition brief can be found [here](#).

NAEHCY CHECKLIST

LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES



Tips on Keeping Track of Responsibilities and Compliance with McKinney-Vento Act

The vast majority of homeless education liaisons are also school professionals with other responsibilities. Guidance counselors, social workers, school nurses, superintendents, principals, and others often serve as their school or district’s homeless education liaison and must balance the responsibility of what can often be two full time jobs at once.

The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth has developed several “checklists” for liaisons to use as a quick reference guide to ensure proper procedures are being followed.

The first NAEHCY brief is an identification and enrollment checklist that goes over defining who is McKinney-Vento eligible, and can be found [here](#).

The second brief covers servicing unaccompanied homeless children and youth. Due to their circumstances these students likely need additional assistance and guidance. The unaccompanied youth brief can be found [here](#).

CHINS

FAMILY SERVICES



Children in Need of Services (CHINS)

Children in Need of Services (CHINS) is a public service that assists families experiencing turmoil to resolve personal disputes in order to keep family units intact.

An intermediary works on behalf of a child in an effort to identify issues they are experiencing in the family, which can include abuse, neglect, other harmful behavior, or misunderstandings and provides suggestions and action plans the family can follow to mend relationships.

Information on CHINS and how to apply for their services can be found [here](#).

IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

SERVICING IMMIGRANT STUDENTS



Immigrant Children Attending School

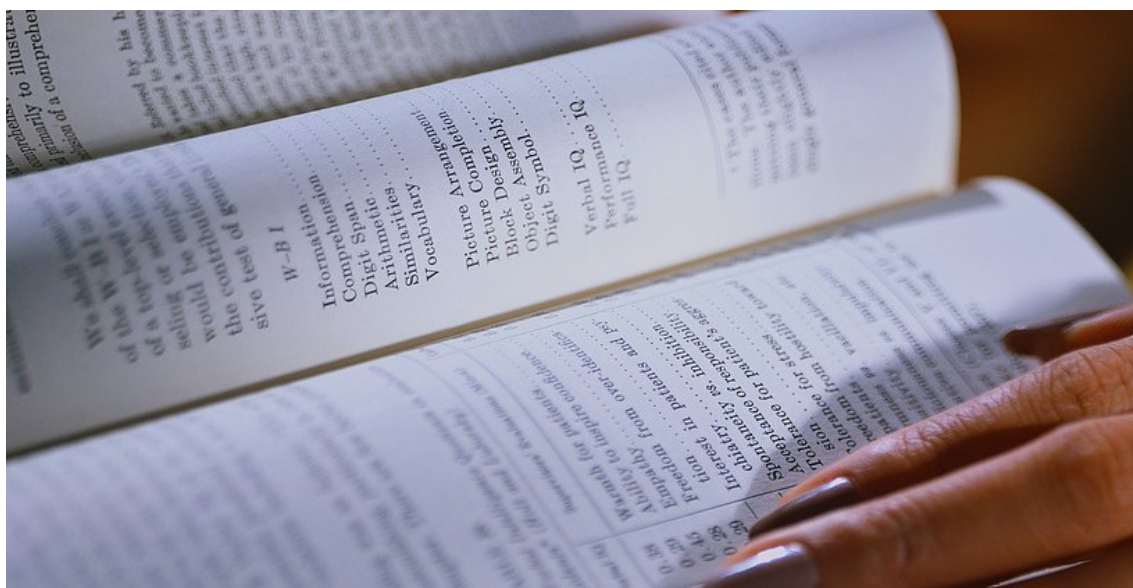
All children in the United States are allowed access to educational services, regardless of immigration status and other barriers, such as language or disabilities. The McKinney-Vento Act specifically waives many traditionally required documentation for homeless and unaccompanied in order to enroll in school, and this extends to immigrant students. The U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice have put together fact sheets and briefs that outline the responsibilities of school districts to enroll immigrant children, regardless of citizenship status and documentation.

The U.S. Department of Education immigrant fact sheet can be found [here](#).

The U.S. Department of Justice brief can be found [here](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

HELPFUL DOCUMENTS AND TRAININGS



Additional Documents and Training Opportunities

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) frequently offers webinars and trainings on McKinney-Vento and homeless related issues. Individual, self-paced and group trainings are both available, and can be found [here](#).

The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) and the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP) have developed a comprehensive Q&A on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act that covers all of the fine points a homeless education liaison needs to know to assist homeless and unaccompanied children, youth, and their families. The Q&A can be found [here](#).

The New Hampshire Department of Education's Homeless Education Program's webpage has additional documents to assist homeless education liaisons and interested stakeholders in understanding homeless issues. Additionally, statewide testing scores, liaison contact lists, NH-specific homeless numbers, and other materials are available. The Homeless Education Program's webpage can be found [here](#).